

WASHINGTON POST

PARADE'S SPECIAL

by LLOYD SHEARER

COLBY'S
CIA BOOK

William Colby, who was fired as director of the Central Intelligence Agency by Gerald Ford in November 1975, will be hitting the road shortly to plug his book, "Honorable Men--My Life in the CIA," for which he received a \$160,000 advance.

The book title, ironically, is derived from a 1971 statement made by Colby's predecessor, Richard Helms, who was fined for failure to give full testimony to Senate investigators. Helms said: "The nation must to a degree take it on faith that we, too, are honorable men, devoted to her service."

Like almost all honorable men, Colby, when he reported for work at the CIA in 1950, signed the entrance-on-duty secrecy agreement which states: "I will never indulge, publish or reveal by writing, word, conduct or otherwise any classified information, including CIA cover arrangements, to any unauthorized person without prior consent of the director of Central Intelligence or his representative."

Thus, when Colby and his collaborator Peter Forbath finished their book a few months ago, Colby dutifully submitted his manuscript for security review by Adm. Stansfield Turner, the present CIA head.

Turner read it and asked Colby to make only two deletions, one concerning satellite photography and the other dealing with the true objective of the Glomar Explorer project.

Colby quickly assented--a sharp contrast to Frank Snepp, a former "spook" who was the CIA's chief strategy analyst in Vietnam.

Snepp, 34, is the author of "Decent Interval," a highly critical account of how and why the CIA abandoned hundreds of its South Vietnamese employees and collaborators to the Vietcong in the evacuation debacle of Saigon in April 1975.

In "Decent Interval," Snepp, son of a Superior Court judge in Charlotte, N.C., points an accusing finger at Henry Kissinger, ex-secretary of state; Graham Martin, the last U.S. ambassador in South Vietnam, and Thomas Polgar, the CIA station chief in Saigon. He reveals no classified information, blows no cover of any CIA agent.

Snepp, however, did not submit his book for security clearance, and because of that the U.S. government is suing him in a civil action, charging that he breached his employment contract with the agency.

The CIA plans to eliminate 820 positions, and the government undoubtedly fears that some of these former employees may duplicate the Snepp literary stunt. It therefore seeks to collect in damages whatever he earns from his book and establish judicial precedent.

Snepp, in a countersuit, contends that the Justice Department suit violates his First Amendment rights to freedom of speech. He maintains that the government cannot restrain in advance his right to speak and publish when "national security" is not involved.

The government insists, however, that Snepp's tongue and pen be prohibited from publicly disclosing anything about the CIA so long as he shall live. The case most probably will wind up in the U.S. Supreme Court, whose ruling will decide the ultimate role of the CIA in a democratic society.

File